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The translation techniques for the feibai stylistic trope in “A Dream of Red Mansions”

Abstract

This paper aims to reveal common and specific patterns to translate the feibai stylistic trope into Russian and English in a particular literary work. The material for the study included the first 80 chapters united under the title “The Story of the Stone” of the most popular Chinese classical novel “A Dream of Red Mansions” written in the genre of family chronicals and their four translations: two – into English and another two – into Russian. The total of 21 feibai and 84 variants of their translation (42 Russian and 42 English) were analyzed. As a result, along with common patterns, considerable differences were found. The differences were determined by, firstly, the type of feibai (character-based, pronunciation-based or meaning-based), secondly, by the native linguoculture of each translator. Common patterns for Russian and English translations were high frequency of dynamic equivalence translation technique, the same number of omissions, similar number of literal translation technique, the same number of combinations of techniques. However, in English translations, the total number of techniques and combinations used exceeded the ones in Russian translations. Amplification and adaptation were not found in Russian translations. Also, combinations turned out different. These differences are determined by linguocultural differences, each translator’s personality and the differences in the time when the translations were performed.

Keywords: Chinese classical novel, feibai as a stylistic trope, translation strategy, translation technique, translation techniques distribution

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